

THE MORNING NEWS

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A record 18.23% growth in 2013! ATA: Aruba welcomed 688.472 cruiseship tourists to Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) received the final figures for our cruise tourism and is very pleased to announce that Aruba has once again experienced a whopping growth of 18.23% in this segment.

This growth was registered for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2013, where our port reached a total of 688.472 tourists. In the same period of 2012, Aruba received 582.313 cruise tourists. Hence, Aruba received 106.159 more tourists in 2013 compared to 2012.

With respect to the number of cruise ships to visit Aruba, figures show that there was an increase of 63 cruise calls. When compared to 2012 (294) with 2013



Aruba received 9 ships with 21.470 passengers.

The value of a cruise tourist is very high. Not only for the money they spend here during their short stay, as everyone of these tourists are considered a potential return tourist who could return for a

much impact on our stable growth and strong number of visitors. Among the cancellations were six calls from the cruiseship Freewinds, two from Caribbean Princess, and one call from the Coral Princess, Delphin, Grandeur of the Seas, Brilliance of the Seas and Disney Wonder.

The warm welcome and good service cruise tourists receive on Aruba and the enthusiasm and professionalism of our partners in tourism and the business community, are the main points for Aruba's strength in the tourism industry. The human capital combined with positive developments in the industry with respect to the different services of tours and activities and certainly our clean beaches, tranquility and beauty, is what makes the cruise ships companies consider Aruba as one of the most attractive destinations to offer their clients.

longer stay on Aruba. What's more, every tourist who visits our island will spread the good news about Aruba among their friends and family, which helps promote our tourism industry.

An analysis of the final figures indicate that although Aruba's tourism industry had projected, or say had reservations for 370 cruise ship calls, in the end there were 13 cancellations. This did not cause



(357), this results in a positive difference of 21.43%. The months when more tourists came to Aruba on a cruise ship in 2013 were January (64 calls and 118.542 passengers); December (49 calls and 96.136 passengers); March (44 calls with 84.229 passengers) and February (43 calls and 88.888 passengers). The slowest month, August, which is the low season for cruises in the Caribbean,

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White House releases Iran implementation agreement

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The White House released a summary of the implementation deal that accompanies a six-month interim nuclear agreement with Iran on Thursday, to ease pressure from domestic opponents of the pact.

The summary of "technical understandings" includes a timetable for inspections of Iranian nuclear facilities by UN watchdog the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) officials.

It also contains a payment schedule for nearly \$7 billion in blocked Iranian foreign exchange holdings, a modest easing of sanctions in return for a freeze on some parts of the Iranian nuclear program.

Most of the data in the public document had been made available previously in

various press briefings after the deal was reached last year and after implementation terms were agreed at talks in Geneva last week.

The full text was made available to restricted audience of lawmakers and aides in Congress, White House spokesman Jay Carney said.

The move came after US officials were forced to deny claims that there was a secret side deal accompanying the interim nuclear pact reached in Geneva last year.

"Today we provided Congress with the document containing the technical understandings related to the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action," Carney said.

The IAEA wants to keep certain aspects of the deal confidential, Carney said.

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Decree in working hours for Casino and HORECA



See pg 3

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Aruba to welcome Voyager for the official launching of Johnnie Walker "Odyssey" label

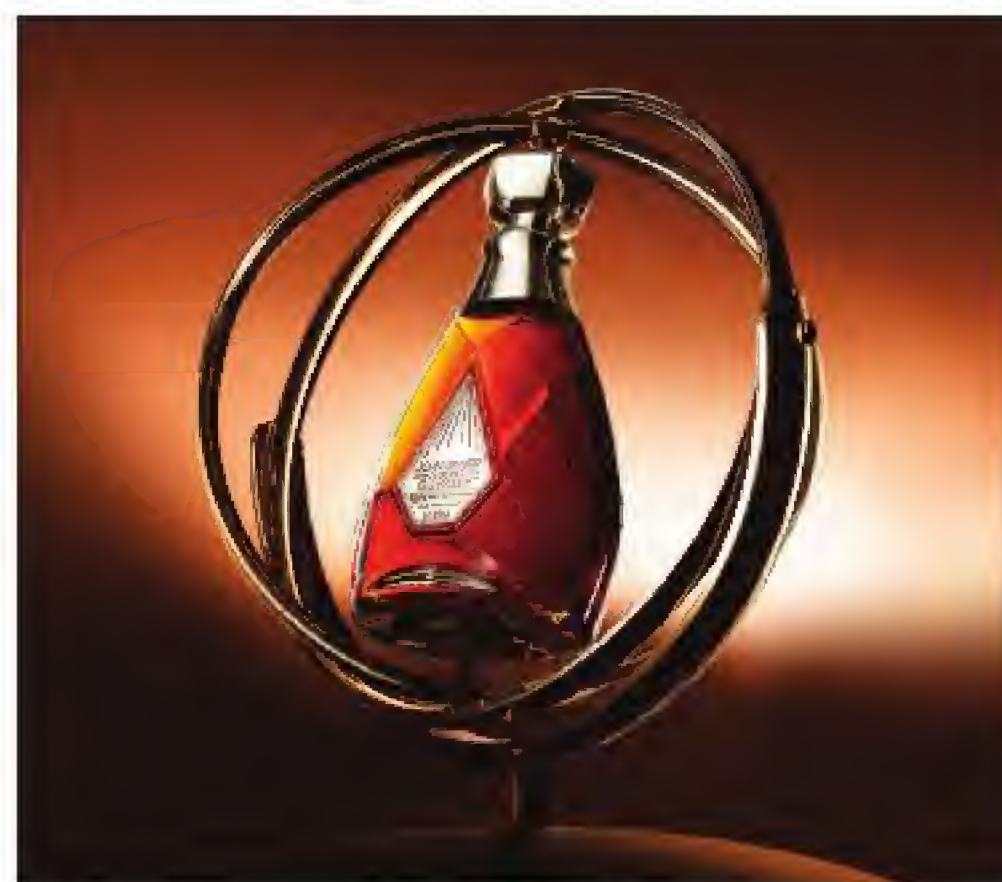


Voyager is making its way to Aruba

their label "Odyssey," a fine, three-malt blend perfected by their Master Distiller, based on Alexander's "secret recipes."

Chris Copeland, Diageo VP of Marketing & Innovation for Latin America & The Caribbean, said: "John Walker and Sons became one of the first truly global brands by engaging ship captains to act as brand ambassadors when taking whisky from Scotland to the four corners of the world. Voyager creates an unparalleled opportunity to celebrate the vision of the Walker family who grew a small grocery store founded in 1820, into the world's number one Blended Scotch Whisky brand."

Voyager navigated the South Pacific, Asian and Indian Oceans, continuing through the Mediterranean and Adriatic, to finally end its tour of the Eastern Hemisphere in Edinburgh, Scot-



Odyssey in gyro

land, the home of Johnnie Walker. The elegant 200ft sailing vessel will now be calling at selected ports in the Caribbean, including Aruba. Christopher Crosbie explained that the island has

been a major point of distribution for scotch whiskey across the region, since the time his father worked in the industry.

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JW Odyssey with case

ORANJESTAD --- The local brand manager and representatives of Johnnie Walker fine whiskies, distributed exclusively on Aruba through Romar Trading, welcomed Diageo Delegates Christopher Crosbie, Victor Alvarez and Katherine Rodriguez to announce the arrival of the

luxury sailing yacht, Voyager, in Aruba's port in February.

The Voyager world journey parallels that of John Walker, creator of the brand over 130 years ago, and his son Alexander, who built the brand, brought it to the world, and perfected many recipes. It punctuates the launching of

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Decree in working hours for Casino and HORECA

ORANJESTAD -- As of January 1st, 2014, a new government decree stipulating the working hours for the HORECA and Casino sector went into effect. Based on article 1 of this decree, the working hours for the HORECA and Casino sectors is maximum 9 hours per day with a limit of 45 hours per week, based on a calculation period of 12 consecutive months. Employers and employees are advised to keep in mind the working hours per week, calculated on a 4 week period, could result in a 48 hour maximum, some weeks, particularly in shorter months, and less during others, as long as they average out to 45 hours weekly over the year.

This means that in a 4 week period it is possible that the working hours per week may be more than 45 hours, but the average per month may not exceed 48 hours.

In the case where the working hours exceed 9 hours per day or the mentioned limit, this will be considered overtime.

In reality several scenarios are possible:

1. There are companies already working with an average of 45 hours. Employees are programmed to work 8 hours with a 30 minute paid break included. This means that in reality they are working 7 hours and 30 minutes.

2. There are companies that can begin working 5 days instead of 6 days per week based on the fact that it is possible to work a maximum of 9 hours per day. This way the worker can work an extra hour every day and get an extra day off.

3. There are companies that can begin fluctuating the

working hours depending on their needs during the high and low seasons.

The introduction of the 45 hour estimate will have consequences for the combined salary as the worker can work different hours. Due to the fact that in these sectors pay is per hour, the salary can fluctuate considerably.

For this reason a transitory rule in article 3 of the Government Decree has been instituted, which states that if the employee in accordance with his contract works more than 45 hours, he maintains his right to his combined salary. Thus, the employee may work less hours, but his salary must be recalculated so that his annual salary remains at least equal to the moment that this Decree was introduced.

The HORECA and Casino Decree also stipulates a rest day for an employee, which is their off day according to schedule, in view of the fact that Sunday is a normal day of work for these sectors. The employee has the right to a short change of at least 11 hours between shifts.

The employee also has the right to one Sunday off per month with pay.

In the case the employee who works more than 6 hours per day, he has the right to a break of at least 30 minutes. The working hours including overtime may not exceed 60 hours per week.

Shift work:

On the 1st of April 2013, the Labor Ordinance (OL 2013) was introduced. The intention of the change of OL 2013 was primarily to offer flexibility in the rule and conditions of work.

Up to April 1st 2013, the

laws with respect to working hours, days and hours of rest were not completely in accordance with the needs of the market based on the developments in our economy. It is important to note that Aruba is a tourism island, which requires our labor laws to be more flexible in order to provide the services that our tourism demands.

One of the changes that OL 2013 brought was the possibility for certain types of companies that are not HORECA or casino or in the continuous work sector, to use shift working hours. Working shift according to OL 2013 entails that you can schedule an employee to work different hours that can vary between 6:00 in the morning and 12:00 at night. Sunday is not automatically a day off, but may be considered a normal working day for an employee who is paid 100%. The employee who works shift may be scheduled to work 6 of the 11 national off days. In the event that Sunday is a normal work day, he has the right to at least one Sunday off per month.

Important to note here is that not all companies can apply for shift hours. This is specifically only for those companies that have a necessity for more varied hours to offer their products to the local as well as the tourists market. Mostly companies that have a direct relationship to tourism or companies that have recreational activities.

As of January 2014, companies with the following activities can practice shift work according to OL 2013:

- Small businesses in kiosks or in the free market;
- Tour operators, rental transportation on land such as

automobiles, trucks, containers (without chauffeur);

- Rental of motor vehicles;
- Rental of aquatic sport vehicles, excl. leasing (without driver);

- Rental of air transportation (without personnel);

- Rental of recreation products such as bicycles, horses, pleasure yachts, sport utilities to be able to do these activities;

- Cleaning of buildings, incl. Activities/work to disin-

fect and pest control:

- Film or video projection in cinemas and other places of projection or in the open air;

- Production of theatrical presentations;

- Sport activities and services related to this, fishing and hunting as a sport;

- Activities such as saunas, sun bathing, massage clinics, weight loss clinics, escort services, wedding planners, shoe shine and porter services

Continued on pg 4

Early Bird Menu

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm



Appetizers: Stuffed Avocado, Escargots Bourguignon, (choose one) Fruits of the Seven Seas, Choices of Soups

Entrees: Breaded Grouper topped with coconut shrimps served with rice and vegetables

Land & Sea
Chicken Breast, Steak & Shrimps with rice and vegetables

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Children's & Youth Calypso and Roadmarch Contest Is this Saturday, Jan. 18th



Children's participants



Youth participants

ORANJESTAD -- This year the Children's and Youth Calypso and Roadmarch Contest promise to be bigger in comparison with last year. Last year's festival had only 12 participants and this year we have the beautiful number of 26, an excited spokesperson for SAC said.

The Children's category will consist of 14 participants and the line-up will be the following: 1. Xenon Daal, 2. Roshendra Figaroa, 3. Jahmani Eisdien, 4. Tashanira Rasmijn, 5. Zyquelo Guerrero, 6. Jayleen Croes, 7. Ashantee Martus, 8. Zxqu Guerrero, 9. Prisilla Quant, 10. Jair Dijkhoff, 11. Xenon Orfao, 12. Sakandi Chandler, 13. Monique Maduro and 15. Lacey Albus.

The youth category line up: 1. Jada Mejia, 2. Vincent Grovel, 3. Aldwayne Brete, 4. Rudolfo Gonzalves, 5. 6. Joshua Bryson, 7. Italee Brown, 8. Izellah Ruiz, 9. Jake Orfao, 10. Michael

Quant and 11. Ivienne Hernandez.

All participants will be accompanied by Exquizit Band.

The Festival will be held at the Entertainment Center in Dakota at 7 p.m. Saturday. Gate will be opened from 6 p.m. Tickets are available at SAC offices in Dakota or at

the gate. Children's entrance is only Afl. 5,- and adults Afl. 10.

The community is invited to come out and show support for the children in such a beautiful event while also supporting our grand Carnival Jubileum Celebration this year.

Carnaval Schedule

Fri. Jan 17 - Children's Queen Election of Sta. Cruz

Sat. Jan 18 - 6:30 p.m.: Aruba's Children and Youth Calypso & Roadmarch Contest 2014 (Aruba Entertainment Center)

Sun. Jan 19 - 8:00 p.m.: Sign up Happening Caiso & Soca Monarch Contest 2014 (Aruba Entertainment Center)

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Decree in working hours... Cont. from pg 3

Companies which may apply for the shift hours must keep in mind the rules and regulations according to OL2013 such as the conditions regarding combined work from the beginning of the working relationship.

As in the case where an employee has a contract which stipulates that work hours are from 8:00 am to 4:00 p.m., the employer cannot obligate this employee to work from 2:00 pm to 10:00 pm without reaching to a mutual agreement on this.

Companies whose activities do not appear on the above list, for example, supermarkets and commerce in general, can not apply shift hours according to OL 2013. For these companies Sunday remains a day of rest and if an employee is scheduled to work on Sunday he must be paid overtime at 200%.

Increase of overtime compensation:

As of January 1st 2014, the compensation for overtime on the half off day per week (before or after 1:00 p.m.) will be increased by 25%. This means that the compensation for an employee who works overtime on their half day off in the week is a total of 175% of his salary per hour.

There is also an increase of 50% in the compensation for overtime on a national holiday. An employee who works overtime has the right to 250% for every hour of overtime worked. This percentage is not valid for employees working their normal hours on a holiday. The law stipulates that pay for this is 200%. In the event the employee works longer than his normal hours on a holiday, then we can talk about overtime and the employee's right to 250% compensation.

Salary limit for the application of OL 2013:

In April 2013 the salary limit for the application of

OL 2013 was fixed at 2 times the minimum wage (which is Afl. 1636,70 per month). This means that every employee with a salary of more than Afl. 3.273,40 per month does not fall under the protection of the working hours rules, nor the rules pertaining to days or hours of rest, compensation for overtime, etc. These employees have the right to whatever is stipulated in their working contract.

It is important to note that the salary limit is valid only for OL 2013. Other labor laws are not tied to a salary limit.

OL 2013 stipulates that the factor to calculate the salary limit, the factor 2, had to be increased to 2.1 as of January 1st 2014. Within 5 years it is projected to be a factor of 2.5.

In this manner, gradually, more employees will fall under the protection of the OL 2013 rules.

There will be various reforms and changes in 2014 that will affect primarily the employer in the sense that the expense of salaries will increase. We can mention here, for example, the AOV premium with 0,5% and the increase of the obligatory pension to 1%.

Along with this, the compensation for overtime will increase on the half day off in the week as well as on holidays. Also in the HORECA and casino sectors where the salary per hour will increase as a consequence of the introduction of the new HORECA and Casino government Decree.

Based on these changes, the majority of the members of the SER advised the Minister of Labor to not increase the factor to calculate the salary limit for those subject under the law, in January 2014. The Minister in turn decided to follow the advice provided by the SER. This means that the salary limit will remain 2 times the minimum wage.

Aruba to welcome Voyager...

Cont. from pg 2



Diageo Delegates with the Romar Trading Johnnie Walker team



Global Brand Manager Tom Jones will arrive with Voyager

He is very pleased and proud that he will be in attendance when Voyager comes to call at Oranjestad Harbor on Saturday and Sunday, February 15 and 16. Traveling with the ship is Johnnie Walker's Global Brand Ambassador, Tom Jones.

The Caribbean Tour of Voyager will encompass a "series of epic and luxurious Blue Label events which will pay tribute to the Walker family and the modern Super Deluxe blended whiskies, including Johnnie Walker Blue

enders who embody the pioneering spirit of our brand." The events will be by invitation only. The only other island nations to welcome Voyager will be Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua, Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic, before it completes its journey in Miami, Florida.

The announcement of the upcoming visit took place at Texas de Brazil in Palm Beach, where island media was invited to sample the se-



Head of the Caribbean for Johnnie Walker Christopher Crosbie

lect Johnnie Walker labels to be featured during Voyager events. The special label Odyssey, which sells for a minimum of \$1,000 a bottle, was unveiled, contained in a stunning handcrafted crystal decanter. Romar Trading's Betto Wernet conducted the formal tasting, explaining the over and under tones of the three whiskies, and the optimal way to serve and savor these fine liquors.

The journey of Voyager as it makes its way to Aruba can be followed online via Twitter: twitter.com/whiskyexplorer. Facebook: facebook.com/whiskyexplorer and Instagram: [@whiskyexplorer](https://www.instagram.com/whiskyexplorer).

By Rosalie Klein



Betto Wernet educates on the subtleties of fine whiskey

Label, Johnnie Walker Gold Label Reserve and Johnnie Walker Platinum, while celebrating some of the Caribbean and Latin world's most contemporary influ-

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Aruban students doing very well at University of Curaçao



Last Monday Aruban Minister of Education, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar visited the University of Curaçao in connection with their 35 year celebration and the change of the University's name to Universidad di Corsow (UoC). The rector magnificus, Dr. Francis de Lanoy met with the Minister and explained in detail the different programs of the university. He also explained how the university is managed.

According to the Rector, there is an enthusiasm in the technical area by female students from Aruba compared to those from Curaçao.

The students are guided by the international department

of the university upon their arrival. For two days they receive a tour around Curaçao, visiting important locations such as City Hall where they must register.

There are currently 99 Aruban students at the University of Curaçao. A few live on campus and the others live either with family or in an apartment in the vicinity, making them very independent while studying in Curaçao. In addition to the university's normal program, the university also offers a total of 10 programs for students to achieve their Masters degree.

The Curaçao university is currently working with IPA in

offering an online course leading to the Masters degree. There are 30 students in Aruba enrolled in this online program. These students can go to work during the day and at night follow the program.

The Minister informed the Rector of some of the plans that the Aruban university has which are currently under discussion.

Minister Hooyboer-Winklaar was pleased with the interchange between the two institutions and indicated that it is good that there be even more exchange of mutual experiences of the two institutions.

White House releases Iran implementation...

Cont. from pg 1

Opponents of the interim nuclear deal between the P5+1 group of powers and Iran warn that it gave up too much to Iran in return for too limited commitments to slow its nuclear activity.

The White House is battling hawkish senators from the Republican and Democratic parties who want to slap new sanctions on Iran despite warnings from Obama that they could force Tehran to walk away from talks on a permanent agreement.

The P5+1 group includes the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, the United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany.

The interim deal, meant to buy time for detailed negotiations on thwarting what the West sees as Tehran's drive for nuclear weapons, will go into force on January 20.

"With this implementation plan, we have made concrete progress," the White House said in its summary of the document.

"We will now focus on the critical work of pursuing a comprehensive resolution that addresses our concerns over Iran's nuclear program."

The summary was released amid rising specula-

tion that Secretary of State John Kerry could meet Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at the World Economic Forum in Davos next week.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said there were no meetings so far to announce but noted Kerry would be in the Swiss resort at the same time as "a number of Iranian officials."

The summary confirmed that, under the deal, Iran would halt production of near 20 percent uranium and start to dilute the uranium stockpile it already has.

Iran has also committed not to enrich at half of the installed centrifuges at its Natanz plant and three-quarters of installed centrifuges at the Fordow facility.

The Natanz and Fordow sites will now be subject to daily IAEA access as opposed to every few weeks. Its Arak reactor will be subject to monthly IAEA inspections.

Some sanctions relief will be available to Iran on the very first day of the accord.

Once IAEA verification has taken place, the P5+1 will start taking steps to ease the sanctions straitjacket on Iran more broadly.

India's Sonia Gandhi stalls son Rahul PM candidacy push

NEW DELHI (AFP) - India's ruling party was set to put on a united front Friday at a mass meeting after its leader Sonia Gandhi stalled a push to name her son Rahul as prime ministerial candidate at looming elections.

The Congress party conclave, which will see thousands of members gather in the capital New Delhi, is being billed as an opportunity to plot a way to avoid humiliation when the country goes to the polls in May.

After a decade in power, Congress is lagging well behind the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the opinion polls, with voters turned off by an economic slowdown and a string of corruption scandals.

With Prime Minister Manmohan Singh retiring after two terms, the party had been expected to nominate the 43-year-old Rahul as its choice for premier at the conclave.

But the prospects of such an elevation were dashed when it emerged that Sonia Gandhi, who is the party's powerful president, had made her opposition to such a move clear at a committee meeting of Congress leaders on Thursday.

"All the members of the CWC (Congress Working Committee) wanted him to be announced as the PM candidate but the Congress president intervened," Congress spokesman Jannardan Dwivedi told reporters.

"She said: 'This is not the party's tradition (to announce its PM candidate before elections). Just because some party has declared the PM candidate, does not mean that Congress will do the same!'"

While it had already been agreed that Rahul would lead the Congress campaign, there has been a growing push within the party to name him as candidate for prime minister after the BJP declared Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi as its choice back in September.

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Brazil acts to combat 'abusive' World Cup prices

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Government-backed Brazilian consumer groups on Thursday struck a deal with Rio hoteliers to ban "abusive" pricing and prevent fans being ripped off during the upcoming World Cup.

Sky-high costs have become such a concern in the run-up to the event that the government set up a commission headed by the presidential chief of staff to keep prices in check.

After talks with consumer organizations, the Rio branch of Brazilian hoteliers' association ABIH agreed that hotels must charge no more during the World Cup than they do at New Year and during next month's carnival.

"Brazil is investing for the next 50 years -- not just a month," said Juliana Pereira

of consumer affairs monitor Senacon, arguing that lasting tourist infrastructure will help Brazil more than price gouging.

"We must guarantee consumer rights are respected," added Pereira, noting there was a widespread perception at home and abroad that Brazil is an overpriced country.

In a separate development, aviation authorities agreed to a request from airlines to authorize an extra 1,973 domestic flights between June 6 and July 20, a period which includes the Cup.

Some Brazilian airlines reacted earlier this month to government pressure on fares by setting price ceilings -- though the maximum of \$1,000 for a domestic return or \$450 for a single compares

unfavorably with fares in many other countries.

Brasilia has so far resisted allowing foreign airlines to operate domestic routes during the June 12 to July 13 tournament.

Brazil is shelling out an estimated \$11 billion to stage the World Cup, and protests against such spending on a sporting jamboree rather than on health and education turned violent last year.

Yet the country hopes to recoup its investment if some three million domestic and 600,000 foreign tourists criss cross the giant country.

Many hotel and ticket packages are being offered through world football body FIFA's accommodation agency MATCH, over whose prices Brazilian state tourism body Embratur has no influence.

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Vatican grilled on child abuse by UN watchdog



GENEVA (AFP) - The Vatican insisted Thursday it is committed to stamping out sexual abuse by the clergy, as top Church officials were grilled before the UN's child rights watchdog.

The hearing came as Pope Francis said all Catholics should feel "shame", in an apparent reference to the scandals that have rocked the Church for more than a decade.

Under the spotlight at the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva, the Vatican delegation insisted it understood what it had to do to root out sexual crimes.

The Roman Catholic Church has faced a cascade of scandals involving child sexual abuse by priests and Catholic lay officials, from Ireland to the United States and from Australia to Germany.

Like other signatories of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Vatican agrees to submit regular reports on its respect for the rules, and to be scrutinised by an 18-member watchdog panel.

Thursday's session -- a regular review of the Holy See's rights record, and not exclusively focused on the abuse issue -- marked the Vatican's second appearance before the committee.

UN committee member Hiranthi Wijemanne charged that perpetrators were too often shielded by the Church hierarchy.

Past cases of abuse were often covered up by priests' su-

periors, who typically transferred offenders to new parishes, rather than turn them over to police.

Scicluna insisted this was not Church policy.

The Vatican's UN ambassador, Monsignor Silvano Tomasi, said the Holy See was legally responsible only for implementing the UN Convention on the tiny territory of Vatican City -- a position long criticised by campaigners.

But he said that as the central body of the Church the Vatican was working with its local branches to develop measures to stem sexual abuse.

Benedict XVI, pontiff from 2005 to 2013, was the first pope to apologise to victims and call for zero tolerance of abuse, though critics say that his rhetoric outstripped action.

Pope Francis has vowed to take things further by setting up a special committee to investigate crimes, enforce prevention measures and care for the victims.

Pressed for details of the Vatican committee, Tomasi said the ground rules and membership were still being established.

the long-standing policy of the Holy See," he insisted.

The Vatican says it continues to receive around 600 claims against abusive priests every year, many dating back to the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

Victims' groups say the issue is far from settled with cases of ongoing abuse emerging regularly and the total tally potentially in the hundreds of thousands.

TAJ MAHAL; Taste of INDIA - If you like your Indian food authentic, or are looking for a new and unique dining experience, an evening at Taj Mahal will deliver a memorable meal. A seemingly endless menu offers scores of choices for fish, chicken, lamb and vegetarian dishes that are "the real deal," discover that Indian food goes way beyond curry!

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Main dishes are accompanied by a choice of rice, mixed vegetables rich with garlic, or Naan, plain, buttered, onion or garlic, and you will want



to order an extra basket or two of this tasty delight, on which you can spoon your main course, as well. Poori is crispy fried naan, and most definitely worth the extra two dollars to sample with your meal. Located behind the Royal Plaza Mall, Taj Mahal offers a dining experience that is truly out of the ordinary; they feature an excellent and tasty selection for vegetarians too. If you are a fan of Indian food, or have been toying with trying it, Taj Mahal is the place for a very affordable dining experience and the real deal!

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Police crack Philippine live-streaming paedophile ring

MANILA (AFP) - Police around the world Thursday said they had dismantled a paedophile ring that streamed live sexual abuse of Filipino children as young as six over the Internet, with victims' parents involved in some cases.

Fifteen victims aged between six and 15 have been rescued as part of Operation Endeavour, Britain's National Crime Agency said, adding that 29 people had been arrested, including 11 in the Philippines.

Three other ongoing investigations into paedophiles who pay to see abuse via webcams have identified 733 suspects,

the agency added, warning of a "significant and emerging threat" in developing nations.

Under Operation Endeavour British police worked alongside counterparts in the Philippines and Australia.

Gilbert Sosa, head of the Philippine police's anti-cyber-crime unit said that severe poverty had forced many youngsters into prostitution or into working in so-called cybersex dens, a booming business believed to be focused on the central island of Cebu.

Britain's crime agency said Operation Endeavour began in 2012 with the discovery of obscene videos on a British paedophile's computer.

The British man, Timothy Ford, was sentenced in March last year to eight and a half years in prison while an associate, Thomas Owens, was convicted four months later.

Both men were said to have paid for live abuse of children on the Internet, and had at one point planned to travel to the Philippines to carry out "contact abuse" of minors.

Authorities in 12 countries were involved in the arrest of 29 suspects, the British crime agency said.

The agency called abuse in developing countries "a significant and emerging threat".

US suspends 34 nuclear missile officers over exam cheating

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US military has suspended 34 officers in charge of launching nuclear missiles for cheating on a proficiency test, Air Force leaders said Wednesday.

The scandal at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana marked the latest in a series of damaging revelations dogging the country's nuclear force, including a separate probe into illegal drugs that came to light last week.

Officials said it was the largest scale cheating scandal ever in the nuclear force, as it implicated roughly 20 percent of the Malmstrom base's 190-member launch officer corps.

The Air Force also stripped the officers of their security clearances over the allegations.

The cheating came to light as criminal investigators were looking into alleged illicit drug possession by some officers at Malmstrom and other bases.

The Air Force has come under growing scrutiny over a spate of setbacks linked to the nuclear force, amid persistent reports of low morale among the troops assigned to the mission.

In a recent embarrassing incident, the head of the 20th Air Force, Major General Michael Carey, who oversaw the country's land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, was sacked in October after he went on a drunken bender in a work trip to Russia.

More than two drinks a day could speed memory loss: study



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Men who consume more than two alcoholic drinks per day while in middle age may speed up their memory loss in later life by up to six years, said a study.

However, there were no differences in memory or mental function between non-drinkers and those who drank less than two drinks, or 20 grams per

day, said the findings in the journal *Neurology*.

For the study, more than 5,000 middle-aged men were interviewed about their drinking habits three times over 10 years.

Then, they underwent memory and other cognitive tests beginning at an average age of 56. These tests were re-

peated twice over the next 10 years.

"Our study focused on middle-aged participants and suggests that heavy drinking is associated with faster decline in all areas of cognitive function in men," said study author Severine Sabia of the University College London.

The mental abilities of heavy drinkers declined between one-and-a-half to six years faster than those who had fewer drinks per day.

Men who drank 36 grams of alcohol or more per day saw the steepest declines in their memory and brain function.

Some 2,000 women were also included in the study, but there were not enough heavy drinkers among them to analyze their rates of mental decline compared to moderate or non-drinkers.

Neurology is the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

Michael Jackson doctor's conviction upheld

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - A California appeals court unanimously upheld Wednesday the involuntary manslaughter conviction of Michael Jackson's former doctor, saying there was evidence of his guilt in the star's 2009 death.

Conrad Murray got a four-year jail sentence in 2011 for the singer's death from an overdose of the anesthetic propofol administered by the medic.

The doctor, who was looking after Jackson as he rehearsed in Los Angeles for a series of comeback concerts in London, served two of the four years in prison, and was let out early for good behavior and due to prison overcrowding.

He had appealed his sentence, saying there was insufficient proof of his guilt and that the jury should have been

isolated during the entire length of the trial.

Murray's "callous disregard for Mr Jackson's health and safety was shown throughout the trial from the manner in which he administered a number of dangerous drugs to Mr Jackson without the appropriate medical equipment, precautions or personnel in place, and to the manner in which he left Mr Jackson unattended," the judges said.

The panel also found that the evidence presented at sentencing showed that Murray "failed to take responsibility and displayed a lack of remorse throughout the proceedings."

Murray's lawyer Valerie Wass said the decision was "disappointing but not unexpected."

900 pupils hit by suspected food poisoning in Japan

TOKYO, January 16, 2014 (AFP) - More than 900 pupils at elementary schools in a central Japanese city have fallen ill in a suspected outbreak of mass food poisoning, officials said Thursday.

The number of students who reported vomiting and diarrhoea reached 905 by late Thursday at 14 elementary schools in Hamamatsu, a seaside city around 200 kilometres (125 miles) southwest of Tokyo, the local education board said.

About 40 teachers and staff at these schools also showed symptoms of food poisoning, said the board.

The affected schools were closed Thursday and will remain shut until at least the end of Friday.

"We have detected norovirus in five stool samples taken from some of the affected pupils," Hamamatsu city health official Toshihiko Furuta said.

The incident follows reports of more than 1,400 people falling sick across Japan after eating frozen food suspected to have been laced with pesticides.



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French court rules out euthanasia for quadriplegic

REIMS (AFP) - A French court Thursday ruled against ending the life of a 38-year-old quadriplegic who has been in a vegetative state for years and whose family have been divided about his fate.

Doctors treating Vincent Lambert, as well as his wife, wanted to cut off intravenous food and water supplies but his deeply religious Catholic parents and other family members opposed the decision and took the matter to court.

A 2005 law in France legalises passive euthanasia, where a person causes death by withholding or withdrawing treatment that is necessary to maintain life.

The doctors in the hospital in the northeastern city of Reims wanted to take the step on the basis of this law. Lambert has been in a vegetative state since a road accident five years ago.

But a court in Chalons-en-Champagne near Reims "ordered the doctors to maintain food and water" intravenously, said Jean Paillet, a lawyer for Lambert's parents.

The hospital authorities can now appeal the decision before France's Constitutional Council.

The case comes amid grow-



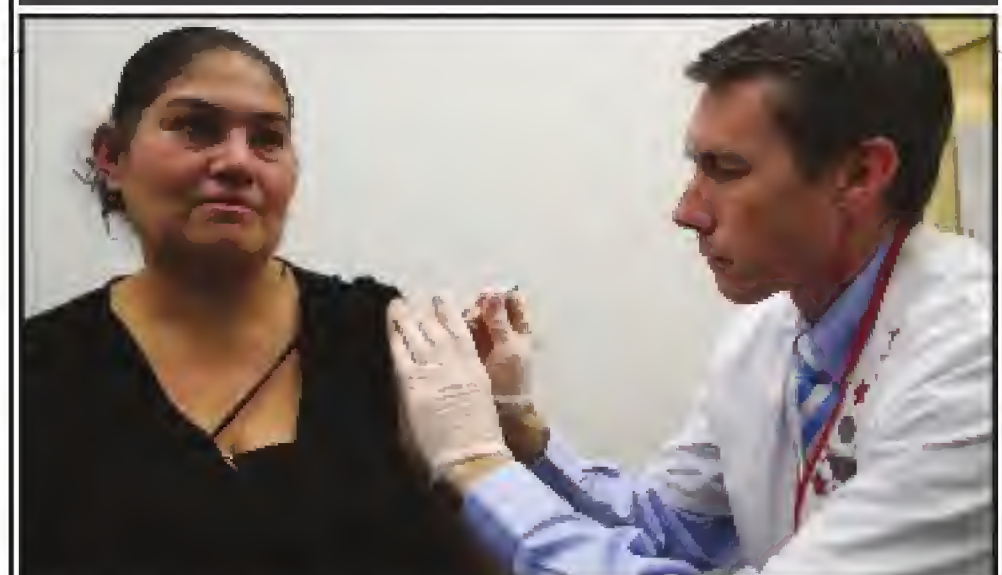
ing debate in France over legalising euthanasia and assisted suicide after several tragic end-of-life stories.

Assisted suicide, which is legal in Switzerland, allows a doctor to provide a patient with all the necessary lethal substances to end their life, but lets them carry out the final act.

Euthanasia goes a step further, and allows doctors themselves to administer the lethal doses of medicine. This practice, legal in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, is the most controversial.

French President Francois Hollande promised during his 2012 presidential campaign to look into legalising euthanasia and this week reiterated his position, but stressed that it would have to be monitored under "strict" guidelines.

H1N1 "swine flu" prevention



CONCORDE (AFP) - Rosa Salazar (L) receives a flu shot from Walgreens pharmacist Robert Fox at a Walgreens Pharmacy yesterday in Concord, California. Public health officials are encouraging residents to get flu shots as an aggressive strain of the H1N1 "swine flu" has killed 15 people in the San Francisco Bay Area.



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'American Hustle,' 'Gravity' lead crowded Oscars race

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Crime caper "American Hustle" and 3D space spectacular "Gravity" topped the Oscars nominations list Thursday with 10 each, leading a crowded field of contenders for Hollywood's most coveted honors.

Historical drama "12 Years a Slave" was close behind with nine nominations in a year chock full of critically acclaimed movies, leaving no clear frontrunners ahead of the Academy Awards on March 2.

"American Hustle" already had momentum after winning three major prizes at last weekend's Golden Globes, Tinseltown's second most high profile awards show, while the harrowing "12 Years a Slave" took best drama.

All four key "American Hustle" actors -- Amy Adams, Christian Bale, Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper -- won nods.

"Hustle," "Gravity" and "Slave" were among nine movies nominated for the best picture Oscar, along with "Captain Phillips," "Dallas Buyers Club," "Her," "Nebraska," "Philomena," and "The Wolf of Wall Street."

Under recently changed rules, the best picture category can include between five and 10 films. The fact that nine are in the race this year underlines the strength of the competition.

Somali pirate drama "Captain Phillips," AIDS activist film "Dallas Buyers Club" and black and white road movie "Nebraska" won six Oscar nods each, according to a list released by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Martin Scorsese's epic about financial greed "The Wolf of Wall Street" and futuristic love story "Her" each got five nominations, which were announced in a pre-dawn ceremony in Beverly Hills.



Matthew McConaughey and Jared Leto both scored noms in the best dramatic weight loss Oscar bait category for Dallas Buyers Club

But there were also snubs: two-time Oscar winner Tom Hanks failed to win a nomination for his roles in "Captain Phillips" or "Saving Mr Banks," while awards season perennials Ethan and Joel Coen got only two nods for "Inside Llewyn Davis" -- neither of them in the main categories.

Veteran actor Robert Redford also did not make the best actor shortlist for his powerful solo performance in shipwreck movie "All is Lost." Britain's Emma Thompson, who played Mary Poppins author PL Travers in "Saving Mr Banks," also was shut out.

For best actor, the nominees were Bale, Bruce Dern for "Nebraska," Leonardo DiCaprio for "The Wolf of Wall Street," Chiwetel Ejiofor for "12 Years a Slave" and Matthew McConaughey for "Dallas Buyers Club."

Both DiCaprio and McConaughey won Golden Globes for their performances. At the Globes, the main acting prizes are split between drama and musical/comedy films.

Up for the best actress Oscar are Adams, Cate Blanchett for "Blue Jasmine," Sandra Bullock for "Gravity," Judi Dench for "Philomena"

and Meryl Streep for "August: Osage County."

Adams and Blanchett took home Globes on Sunday.

Nominated for best director were Russell, Alfonso Cuaron for "Gravity," Alexander Payne for "Nebraska," Briton Steve McQueen for "12 Years a Slave" and Scorsese for "The Wolf of Wall Street."

Oscar winner Lawrence, who won the best supporting actress Globe, is a favorite in the same category at the Academy Awards.

But she will have stiff competition from Sally Hawkins ("Blue Jasmine"), Lupita Nyong'o ("12 Years a Slave"), Julia Roberts ("August: Osage County") and June Squibb ("Nebraska").

For best supporting actor, the nominees are Cooper, Barkhad Abdi for "Captain Phillips," Michael Fassbender for "12 Years a Slave," Jonah Hill for "The Wolf of Wall Street" and Jared Leto for "Dallas Buyers Club."

The best foreign language film nominees include Italy's "The Great Beauty," which won the Globe. It is up against "The Broken Circle Breakdown" from Belgium, Denmark's "The Hunt," Cambodia's "The Missing Picture" and Palestine's "Omar."



Wednesday night to the surprise of no one, Duck Dynasty returned with a season 5 premiere that made no mention of the controversy that nearly drowned the top-rated nonfiction series in cable history in a flood of bad press. In December, Phil Robertson, the rascally, loveable patriarch who leads the cast went one token over the line while chatting with GQ magazine. In the interview, the "squirrel-eating, Bible-thumping, told GQ that homosexuality is a sin, and compared it to bestiality.



Michelle Obama turns 50 Today as one of America's most respected women. But the popular first lady has yet to break free of the confines of one of the toughest jobs in politics. Obama, married for 21 years and with two daughters, Malia, 15 and Sasha, 12, is a history maker in her own right as the first African American first lady. Michelle Obama, fresh from a few days with close girl friends in Hawaii, is expected to celebrate her half-century with a party at the White House on Saturday.

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Facebook ramps Twitter challenge with trends feature

SAN FRANCISCO, (AFP) - Facebook began weaving hot topics into profile pages as it ramped up its challenge to Twitter as an online forum for tuning into current events.

The leading online social network began adding a "Trending" feature that identifies topics spiking in popularity and then displays them next to the News Feed on profile pages.

"The list is personalized, including topics based on things you're interested in and what is trending across Facebook overall," engineering manager Chris Struhar said in a blog post. "You can click on any headline to see the most interesting posts from your friends or (Facebook) Pages that are talking about that particular topic."

The trending feature was being added to the Facebook website in "select countries" for members using desktop or laptop computers and being tested on mobile devices, where screen space is more precious.

Facebook has been working to be a preferred venue for real-time exchanges about the latest happenings, a niche dominated by Twitter.

Australian heatwave set to worsen as fires rage

SYDNEY (AFP) - Australians sweltering through a severe heatwave were warned Thursday that the worst is yet to come, with hundreds of fires raging in several states and temperatures nearing record highs.

Most of southeast Australia has been sizzling in a heatwave that triggered a devastating wildfire on the west coast, razing 55 homes and claiming one life on Sunday.

The mercury has soared above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) for successive days in South Australia and there is a total ban on recreational fires in neighbouring Victoria where players at the Australian Open fainted and



vomited in blistering conditions.

Play was halted on Thursday afternoon due to the extreme heat, and a Melbourne school gardener, aged 76, died after collapsing on Wednesday in the grounds.

Commuters were urged to leave work early to ease peak-hour pressure on trains and buses, with the heat expected to cause significant delays and a wild evening hailstorm forecast.

Health officials in South Australia said 129 people had presented to hospital in the past three days with heat exhaustion and dehydration.

In Victoria state, currently experiencing its longest stretch of hot days since 1903, there were 109 cases and ambulance services reported almost double the average number of call-outs for heart attacks.

Wildfires raged across both states, with South Australia's Country Fire Service saying there were some 800 blazes of concern and an "escalating fire pattern over the next 48 hours", with total fire bans across the state from Friday.

State capital Adelaide had been forecast to eclipse its

hottest-ever day -- 46.1 Celsius, recorded in January 1939 -- but it fell short with the mercury peaking at 44.2 degrees.

It was still hot enough to win the title of hottest city on Earth on Thursday for a brief period, according to the weather bureau.

Cyclists and spectators in Adelaide for next week's Tour Down Under road race were urged to be extra careful venturing into the heat, warnings that were echoed for the large crowds in Melbourne for the Australian Open.

In Victoria, 1,000 fires have been reported in the past 24 hours -- mostly due to lightning strikes -- and 39 had taken hold, with five declared emergencies.

To is expected to bring horrific conditions for fire crews, with strong gusts and a wind change forecast before a cool front arrives.

Officials are warning of some of the worst fire weather in the state since 2009, when the so-called Black Saturday inferno killed 173 people and razed entire towns.

A heatwave ahead of that disaster killed 374 people in

Victoria and another 64 in South Australia.

The Climate Council think-tank said new research had showed that heatwaves were becoming longer and more frequent in Australia, with heat records toppling three times as often as cold records and the number of hot days more than doubling.

"Australia has always had hot weather. However, climate change is loading the dice towards more extreme hot weather," said the council's Will Steffen.

3 people in custody as wildfire north of L.A. grows



LOS ANGELES - Up to 2,000 people were ordered out of their homes in Glendora as a fast-moving fire burned through more than 1,700 acres in the Angeles National Forest northeast of Los Angeles. Three men have been arrested on suspicion of recklessly starting a fire. The men told police they had set a campfire and were tossing papers when a breeze kicked up and started the brush fire, police said. They were booked in the Glendora city jail in lieu of \$20,000 bail. One person suffered some burns and was taken to a local hospital for treatment. About 700 fire personnel are battling the blaze as well as more than a dozen aircraft. The city of Glendora, meanwhile, declared a state of emergency and activated the city's emergency operations center.

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Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.96
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	197.47
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	244.60
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	28.00
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	33.02
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	29.41
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	172.00

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Dutch business leaders slam cabinet policies, support at record low

THE HAGUE - Dutch business leaders are extremely unhappy with the current right-left coalition's policies and think the cabinet is failing to tackle the crisis.

Employers' organisation VNO-NCW questioned 471 company bosses about their attitudes to the VVD-PvdA government and current policy. In total, the cabinet scored just 4.9 out of 10 - a record low according to the Telegraaf.

Prime minister Mark Rutte was rated 5.4, well below most of his senior ministers. Top ranked minister was finance chief Jeroen Dijsselbloem, who scored 6.6.

'Our members are never happy about tax increases but the automatic way these have been applied over the past year

has really annoyed them,' chairman Bernard Wientjes told the Telegraaf.

While entrepreneurs are pleased with progress made on the infrastructure and reducing the crime rate, 86% said not enough is being done to cut red tape. In addition, business leaders think ministers are doing little to tackle the economic crisis and boost consumer confidence.

Around one in four of those questioned said they would vote for the VVD in a new general election - compared with 65% who did so at the last national vote. The Liberal democratic party D66 have doubled their support from 11% to 25%. The Christian Democrats are supported by one in five entrepreneurs.

Dutch Average retirement age rises to almost 64

THE HAGUE - The average retirement age rose again to 63.9 years in 2013, an increase of 0.3 percentage point on 2012, the national statistics office CBS said on Wednesday.

Nevertheless, over half of the working population still stop working before they turn 65, the CBS figures show. The state pension age is currently 65 and two months and is rising to 67 over the next few years.

In 2006, the average retirement age was 61 but has been rising steadily since then. Just 6% of workers now retire before they reach the age of 60.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

T	O	M	D	A	W	N
P	I	A	N	O	A	B
C	A	N	C	U	N	R
A	B	S	S	T	A	L
S	L	E	W	E	S	E
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O	N	E	S	E	L	F
L	O	D	E	P	R	I
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O	A	T	S	A	G	A

Gulf between rich and poor is biggest global risk: WEF

LONDON (AFP) - The growing gulf between the rich and the poor represents the biggest global risk this year, the World Economic Forum declared Thursday ahead of this month's Davos summit.

The institution issued the gloomy warning in its annual Global Risks survey, published before its annual get-together of decision-makers at the Swiss mountain resort of Davos from January 22-25.

"The chronic gap between the incomes of the richest and poorest citizens is seen as the risk that is most likely to cause serious damage globally in the coming decade," the WEF concluded.

In its Global Risks 2014 report, which is based on a survey of more than 700 experts from industry, government, academia and civil society, the WEF outlined possible events that could damage the world

economy this year.

After income disparity, the next most likely risk that could cause systemic shock across the globe was extreme weather, followed by unemployment and underemployment, climate change, and cyberattacks.

The WEF added that the global risk that was of "highest concern" to respondents was the potential for more fiscal crises, in the wake of the eurozone debt drama.

"Economic, societal and environmental risks dominate the list of global risks that the respondents are most concerned about, with fiscal crises emerging as the top issue," the WEF said.

"Despite the efforts of many eurozone countries to control their deficit and debt levels, concerns regarding fiscal crises persist.

"They are also fuelled by the

high levels of public debt in Japan and the US, where political gridlock has exacerbated perceptions.

"Fiscal crises can severely affect the stability of the global economy," it warned.

In addition, the WEF also cautioned about the potential for profound political and social instability.

There was a possibility of the failure of a major financial mechanism or institution that could spark fresh mayhem on world financial markets.

"Five years after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, with its system-wide impacts, the failure of a major financial mechanism or institution also features among the risks that the respondents are most concerned about, as uncertainty about the quality of many banks' assets remains," the report read.

Unemployment insurance not dead, US Democrats vow

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US Democrats insisted Thursday that efforts to extend unemployment benefits were not dead despite their failure to pass Congress, warning that ignoring jobless struggles in an election year would be political dynamite.

Extended benefits beyond the standard 26 weeks of jobless aid expired in late December for more than 1.3 million Americans and counting.

President Barack Obama has called reviving the program a priority, but negotiations on how to do so deadlocked Tuesday as Democrats and Republicans clashed over how to pay for the additional aid.

With Congress going on a week-long break, the issue will not be debated again until January 27 at the earliest, but Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said he intends to take up the matter when lawmakers return to Washington.

Two different proposals collapsed this week. While most Senators are amenable to extending the emergency benefits, Republicans are insisting that they be offset by other

savings and that they do not add to the deficit.

One proposal by nine Republicans would have offered savings by preventing people from receiving both unemployment benefits and disability aid, coupled with additional spending cuts. Democrats rejected it because some of the cuts would hit programs that help the poor.

Nancy Pelosi, top Democrat in the House of Representatives, said there was "no way" lawmakers would leave this issue hanging over their heads in November, when voters -- already frustrated with a poorly performing Congress -- go to the polls.

House Speaker John Boehner, the top Republican in Congress, has stressed he would consider an extension of benefits if they were sensibly paid for, but he reiterated Thursday that he has yet to see such a plan, and was not convinced of the merits of the Senate proposals.

The long-term unemployed have emerged as one of the major hindrances to the US economic recovery, as statistics show jobless Americans are averaging 38 weeks to find new work.

Senator Chuck Schumer said Republicans might be swayed next week when they hear from constituents.



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15 "___ from Heaven"
17 Clock numeral
18 Upshot
19 "___ Griffin's Cross-words"
20 Will beneficiaries
23 Ocean currents
24 Charitable gifts
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26 Edge
27 Jane Fonda's video garb
31 Oozes, as confidence
33 On-line auction house

34 Slow

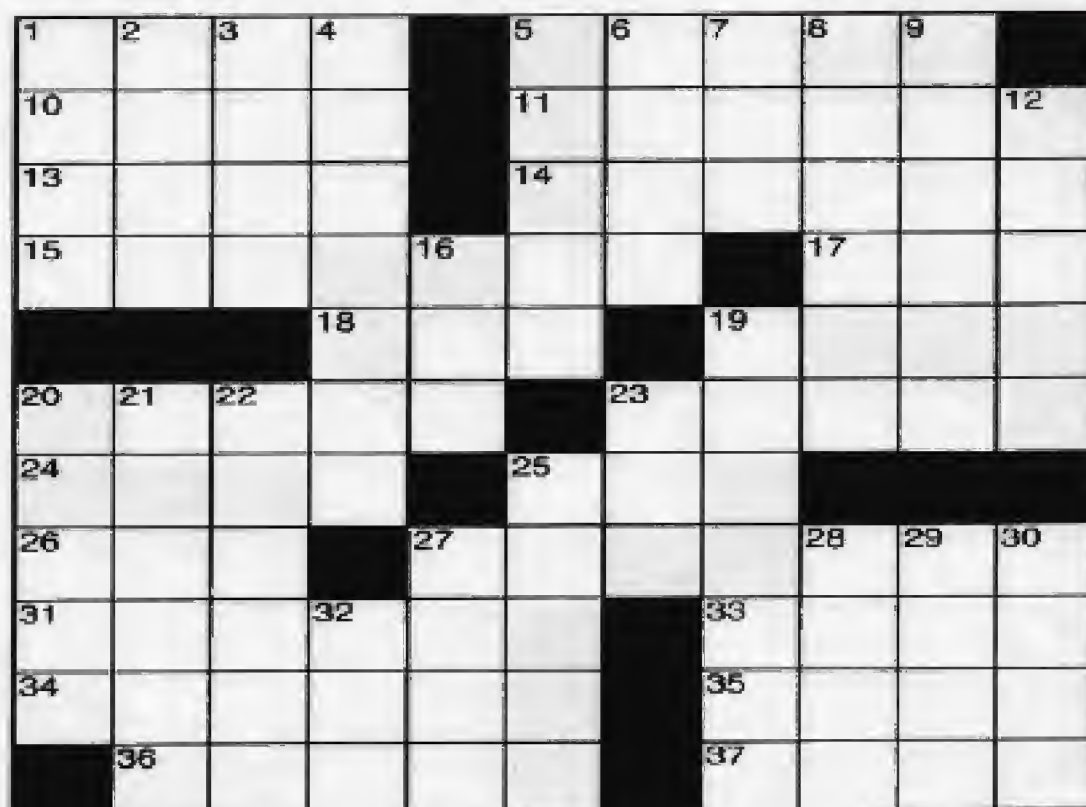
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36 Smells terrible
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2 Wander
3 Ready for business
4 Champions
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21 Alchemist's prepara-
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22 Exempt
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30 Jerry Van ___
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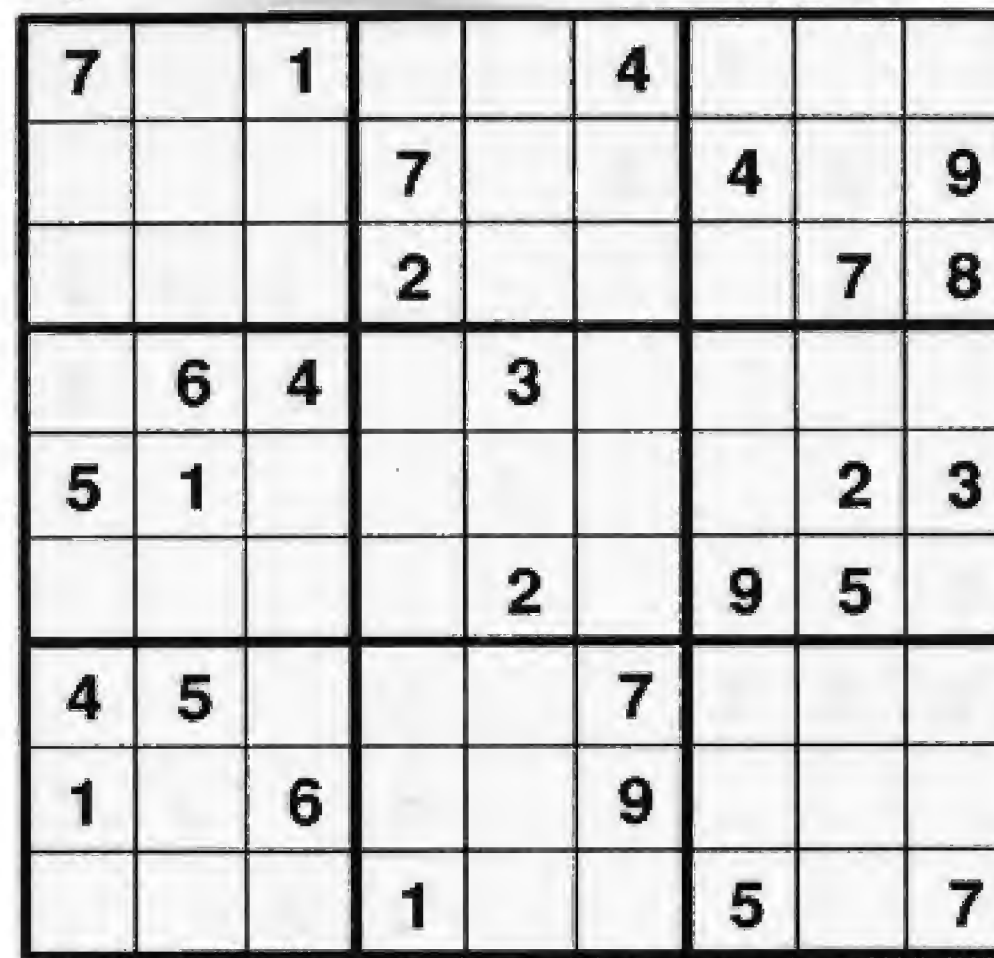
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In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

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Delicious Breakfast

--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on para-

dise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an internationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at

8am, patrons can now order 2 eggs any style (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) and toast for a price of only \$4.99 or All You Can Eat Pancakes for \$6.99! A new plate called the "Home Run" comes with 2 eggs, bacon or sausage, 2 pancakes, toast & home fries - for only \$9.99! Best of all - unlimited coffee or tea - that is, refillable and never ending is only \$.79! Breakfast is served from 8am until noon. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on, after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie, so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda, Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice

beef), and a Western Burger with Aaron's secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato... whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are



ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to

watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish Sunday-Thursday; and until 3am on Friday & Saturdays.

Delivery is available to most Hotels and most beaches!

Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality, it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their 'home away from home' in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded get-



away, we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when

complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facili-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property, not the least is the future value of the

investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

MLB approves expansion of instant replay for 2014

NEW YORK - Major League Baseball is bringing one of the key benefits of watching games at home to the ballpark.

As part of its expanded use of video replay, which baseball announced yesterday, teams will be allowed to show replays of all plays in the ballpark scoreboard, regardless of whether they are reviewed. Previously, close calls were not shown.

The new system of expanded replay, which will be implemented in the upcoming season, will cover most but not all plays and will continue to exclude balls and strikes.

The changes were approved unanimously by the 30 clubs and also go the OK of the players association and the umpires union.

One of the key modifications from the original proposal is that managers will be limited to no more than two challenges per game. Initially they were going to be given three, but concerns about pace and length of games prompted a reduction. Managers will start with one challenge and will get a second only if the first play they challenged is overturned.

However, from the seventh inning on, the crew chief may opt to request instant replay on any reviewable call. Those include home run and other boundary calls, same as last season.

Starting with the 2014 season, they will also include:

- Ground rule double
- Fan interference
- Force play (except the fielder's touching of second base on a double play)
- Tag play (including steals and pickoffs)
- Fair/foul in outfield only
- Trap play in outfield only
- Batter hit by pitch
- Timing play (whether a



runner scores before a third out)

- Touching a base (requires appeal)
- Passing runners
- Record keeping (Ball-strike count to a batter, outs, score, and substitutions)

"I am very pleased that instant replay will expand to include additional impactful plays," Commissioner Bud Selig said in a statement. "The new system will give managers valuable recourse in potentially game-changing situations. The opportunity for our fans to see more replays in our ballparks is also an important modification that the Clubs and I favored."

Managers will tell the crew chief verbally, and they will be able to request review of several portions of a play. However, they must issue the challenge in a timely manner.

Through a hard-wired headset near home plate, the crew chief and at least one other umpire will then contact the replay command center in New York, which is staffed by major league umpires.

After reviewing the video feeds, the replay official will decide whether there is "clear and convincing evidence" to overturn a call. The replay official will also determine where to place the runners. His

decision on all matters is final and cannot be argued.

Managers will be allowed to get some electronic help in deciding whether to challenge a call. Although no monitors will be permitted in the dugout, the manager or one of his coaches will be able to contact a video specialist in the clubhouse who will have access to the same video as the replay official.

Both home and visiting teams will have access to the same technology and video.

NBA: Lakers' Young banned one game for swinging a punch

NEW YORK (AFP) - Los Angeles Lakers guard Nick Young has been suspended one game without pay for throwing a punch at Phoenix Suns guard Goran Dragic, the NBA announced on Thursday.

Young swung his fist at the Slovenian with 7:33 remaining in the second quarter of the Lakers' 121-114 loss at Phoenix on Wednesday.

NBA president of basketball operations Rod Thorn said Young will miss the Lakers' visit to Boston on Friday as a result of the suspension.

The league also fined center Alex Len, a 7-foot-1 center from Ukraine who was ejected for his flagrant foul against Young, a total of \$15,000 and fined Suns forward Marcus Morris \$25,000 for escalating the altercation.

The Lakers slid to 14-25, the second-worst record in the Western Conference, with their sixth loss in a row with the defeat while the Suns improved to 22-16, seventh in the Western Conference just ahead of Dallas (23-17).

NBA's Kings to accept Bitcoin for tickets

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - US basketball outfit the Sacramento Kings said Thursday they would begin accepting Bitcoin, the first professional sports team to accept the virtual currency. Fans will be able to use Bitcoin for tickets and team merchandise from March 1, using the so-called cryptocurrency's payment processor BitPay. The Kings said the move was part of majority team owner Vivek Ranadive's "NBA 3.0" philosophy, aimed at tapping technology to boost the team. "With BitPay, we are able to implement a technology that allows our fans to make Kings-related purchases without physically reaching into their wallets," Ranadive said in a statement. Based in Sacramento, California, the Kings have done poorly since last appearing in the post-season playoffs in 2006. As of Wednesday night, their record was 14 wins and 23 losses. Bitcoin were trading at around one to \$930 in late Tuesday, according to the MtGox market, compared to \$945 late Wednesday.

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BUDAPEST (AFP) - Italy's Anna Cappellini and Luca Lanotte won ice dancing gold at the European figure skating championships in Budapest on Thursday. The pair held their lead from the short dance to take their first major title after the free dance final ahead of Russia's Elena Illyukh and Nikita Katsalapov. Britain's Penny Coomes and Nicholas Buckland took bronze. They are the second Italian ice dancers to win the European title after Barbara Fusar-Poli and Maurizio Margaglio in 2001.



PHILADELPHIA (AFP) - Andre Blake, a 23-year-old Jamaican goalkeeper, was the first pick of Thursday's Major League Soccer Draft by the Philadelphia Union after trading with DC United to obtain the selection. Blake conceded only 15 goals in 20 matches last season for the University of Connecticut and became the first goalkeeper selected first overall in the entry draft of unclaimed amateur talent. No goalkeeper had been taken so high in the draft since Chivas USA picked Brad Guzan second overall in 2005. Two American defenders from the University of California went next, DC United taking Steve Birnbaum second and Christian Dean selected third by the Vancouver Whitecaps.

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NBA: Clippers sign Turkish sharpshooter Turkoglu

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Hedo Turkoglu, a small forward in his 14th NBA season, signed a contract with the Los Angeles Clippers on Thursday as the team departed for a seven-game, cross-country road trip.

The Turkish veteran worked out for the Pacific division leaders last week, then signed a deal and rushed to the airport to join his new teammates for a flight to New York, where he will suit up for the first time with the Clippers on Friday.

"It feels great," Turkoglu said. "I'm really excited, a little bit nervous. It's a new chapter for me."

Turkoglu, voted the NBA's Most Improved Player in 2008, has averaged 11.9



points, 4.2 rebounds and 3.1 assists in 897 games for Sacramento, San Antonio, Orlando, Toronto and Phoenix.

Turkoglu, who helped Orlando reach the NBA Finals in 2009, provides versatility and

scoring punch off the bench for the Clippers, who are 27-13, fourth in the Western Conference.

Turkoglu, 34, has twice been to the NBA playoff semi-finals, giving the Clippers some much-needed post-season experience as they hope to win a playoff series for only the third time since moving from San Diego in 1984.

Turkoglu has played in only 11 games since the start of the 2012-13 season, benched by a broken hand and fractured cheekbone as well as serving a 20-game ban for using performance-enhancing drugs.

He has not appeared in an NBA game this season and was released by Orlando two weeks ago.

Football: England to play Peru, Ecuador, Honduras



LONDON (AFP) - England will play Peru, Ecuador and Honduras in a trio of friendly matches prior to this year's World Cup in Brazil, the Football Association confirmed on Thursday.

England were drawn against Uruguay and Costa Rica, as well as Italy, in their World Cup group, leading manager Roy Hodgson to prioritise pre-tournament friendlies against Central and South American

nations.

Hodgson's side will play Peru at Wembley on May 30, before travelling to Miami for a warm-weather training camp.

They will tackle Ecuador on June 4 and Honduras on June 7, with both games taking place at the Sunlife Stadium, home of the Miami Dolphins NFL team.

"I'm delighted with the games we have been able to secure and the programme running up to the World Cup in general," Hodgson said.

"I was clear to those responsible at the FA that I was looking for Central and South American opposition ahead of the tournament and that is exactly what has been delivered."

It will be the first time that England have played either Peru or Honduras.

Brazil Taekwondo preparing for Suriname match

ORANJESTAD - Last Saturday Clifford Rasmijn of the Brazil Taekwondo Foundation began training his -Train Hard Fight Smart team with the TK5 team for Suriname.

Brazil Taekwondo Foundation began the year with training in preparation for Suriname, which will be their first competition between Aruba, Curacao, French Guyana, Guyana and Suriname.

Coach for the TK5 team, Clifford Rasmijn, is giving his all to preparing the TK5 team well so that they would be pre-

pared for Suriname.

There training was done at the gate of Seroe Colorado where their warming up began. This was continued up to the field where they received several drills. They continued running in the direction of the grave yard where they did some gymnastics.

They then continued on to the hill climbing this as a team. Every week they will increase the training level with the goal of being mentally and physically well prepared.

This Saturday the training will continue at Baby Beach.



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ORANJESTAD - AI Training Performance Center is soon to celebrate their second year of existence in the Barcadera area. At the beginning of 2012, Aldrick Maduro together with his wife opened their trainings center.

Here they created a center for physical preparation where young athletes and adults who also practice sports could develop themselves.

They receive specific training systemically designed for cardiovascular development. Also, body stabilization, corporal strength, flexibility and mental focus.

ATP Center has a dynamic young team which work under the guidance of director/Sports Performance Coach, Aldrick Maduro. T

This team offers condition training and strength to different selections and athletes and reserved groups. They also

cater to international parties who come for training. ATP has trained athletes for bowling, swimming, triathlon, synchronized swimming, women's softball, volleyball and windsurfing.

There are also athletes of the Martial Arts, athletics, football, marathon and cycling that have been trained by ATP over the past two years.

During the past year ATP has witnessed the accomplishments of various athletes that were trained by them.

For example:

ATP Center received a one month's visit from international Olympic athletes Mary Kilman (USA) and Reem Abdalazam (Egypt). They came to train with our local talents of synchronized swimming, Anouk Eman and Kyra Hoevertsz. Both Eman and Hoevertsz are currently residing in the US preparing for the 15th World Championship of FINA in Barcelona.

Sports Federations of Aruba are in the process of restructuring and developing to raise the athletic level. They are working with the assistance of a physical preparer. Doing this is completely new for the majority of our federations.

In addition to this, there is also an interchange of collaboration with the center for medical assistance (CEMEDAR), which is also an important area in the assistance of an athlete.

ATP Center is very proud to have achieved this much in such a relatively short time. They are especially pleased to work with children and young



people. In view of the many young people who get off on the wrong track, they are

pleased to see how many still choose to dedicate themselves to the discipline of sports.

	Results	Event	Place
Bowling	Thashaina Seraus Osmar Bislip & Renald Thiel	49th QUBICA AMF Bowling World Cup 2013 Russia CONCECABOL Youth & Junior Costa Rica 2013	6th 1st
Ciclismo	Cherley van der Linden	I Youth South American Games 2013 Lima, Peru	1st
Landamento	Ally Ponson	15th Fina World Championship Barcelona 2013 (ESP)	38th
Synchro	Anouk Eman & Kyra Hoevertsz	15th Fina World Championship Barcelona 2013 (ESP)	24th & 27 th
Triathlon	Chester Hill	I Youth South American Games 2013 Lima, Peru	2nd & 8th
Windsurfing	Renze Postma	Aruba International Tri & Tri-Key West, FL, USA	1st & 4th
	Steven Max Lageveen	Youth - Junior European Championship 2013 Croatia	2nd & 2nd
			AMF Double Junior Time Trial 50 meters Free Duet Tech & Free Relay & Individual Overall Open Olympic Distance U17 & U19 Freestyle